



Friend of Fire



351 33 30

Chapter 1 by Always Patricia

In the damp darkness of the massive wooden ship's bowels, the group of sailors gathered, tightly clustered, around the chained man crouched defiantly on the floor. His hair was bedraggled and shorn in odd places, but most notable were his hands. Pitch black, unnaturally so, every inch up to his elbows. The tallest sailor moved in and roughly pulled him upright. "Tell us, slave!" he spat. "Is it true? You can summon dragons?" The captive's stoney gaze met his captor's. "Yes."

Chapter 2 by R



"If you release me, I'll spare you from the fate that awaits whoever is giving the orders." He said in the same monotone voice, staring him straight in the eye. "Fire and Death to those who would oppose the Dragons' Messenger."

The sailors backed off quickly, save for the one who held him. "Don't get haughty, slave. We've been paid a hefty price to deliver you, and those bonds are unbreakable. Your powers are sealed."

The tall sailor let go of the man, causing him to drop down to the floor with a loud clanging of chains. He pulled himself slowly back up, his head hitting the floor. One of the sailors kicked him in the face, but he didn't flinch.

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"What use are your threats, slave? You cannot summon dragons!" Came the taunts. The man gritted his teeth but did not move to react, mostly because the harsh iron

chains burned with every bit he moved.

"You have sealed your fates." He said dryly, letting the blood drip down from the corner of his mouth, not moving to brush it off. "I did offer you an easy way out."

The ship continued sailing, his threats unheeded, as they made way for Rome.

Chapter 3 by Phantim



The rest of the trip was long and arduous as the wooden ship made its way down from the frigid Scandinavian coastline, all the way down to the warm Mediterranean waters of Rome. The mistreatment of the prisoner did not diminish over the long days at sea. So it was that he was little more than walking skeleton, beaten and bruised, when he was thrown on the marble steps of the Emperor's throne.

"Ah, what have we here?" the emperor asks unimpressed.

"It's the dragoncaller your eminence, the one you asked to see," the boat's captain replied.

The emperor sat up in his chair and leaned forward with interest. He wiped a small bit of wine from the corner of his lips.

"Oh, excellent! I was beginning to wonder if the stories about you were as much hogwash as the rest of dreary magic tales the court wizards drag on about. Haha, get it? 'Drag on'? No? Well, I can't expect you to be clever as I. So let's have it then, summon your dragon!" the emperor cried out like an excited boy wanted his presence.

"No," the chained man said.

"Why not?" the Emperor asked, his visage turning sour.

"I will not be entertainment for you roman pigs," the man says. Before he can utter anymore insults the captain gives him a swift kick in the guts.

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away he looks at one of the nearby soldiers, "Legate Remus, unchain him and take him the Colosseum. See if his little 'Dragon Powers' can't entertain the masses tomorrow. "

"Yes my liege," the legate replied.

"Your eminence, it is not wise to unchain the man. Those are special shackles just to---" the boat captain began to explain.

"ENOUGH! Do not presume to doubt my wisdom ship captain! I ought to have you thrown in the fighting pits too for wasting my time... as a matter of fact. Yes. Take him away as well legate!" the emperor commanded with a foul grin.

Hands clamped down on the captain's back as the two were dragged from the emperor's palace.

Chapter 4 by Strawberrychan17



In the distant haze that lay far away from the current scene, the Appenines that guarded the strength of Rome had not let this slave's unfair treatment go unseen. Deep within the tall rolling hills, the scent of innocent blood filled a scaly snout to the brim with rage.

Nika, the feldgrau dragon, panted at the pitifully merciless mortals. They would feel his wrath- for they had sinned against one of his favored advocates. Yes- they would surely pay.

After he took a vastly deep breath of the air around him, he surveyed his den.

Now- one might expect to see copious amounts of artifacts and treasure troves keeping the mighty beast comfortable. However- Nika was a humble dragon who took pride in his meager furnishings within his cave.

The last Dragon Counselor that had once lived with him had left many years earlier. When he had departed, he had neglected to bring his few belongings with him that now furnished the cave.

Finally letting his breath out, tendrils of smoke swirled from the wise dragon's nostrils.

Clambering to the threshold of his domain, Nika emitted a sigh of smog that shriveled up into the clear blue skies above. He recalled upon the days that dragons had ruled the land, sky, and

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Chapter 5 by paul arce



A loud booming roar swept the cold air of the Apennines. The cry echoed through the peaks. Then there was another roar, and another, as the dragons started to awaken. The rumbling awoke the nearby townsfolk, who had only heard of legends, but they learned quickly that the legends were true. as the clouds were blown apart, a seeming 50 dragons swept down. The ground turned a hazy red, and the air turned gray, as the flames wisped from the dragon's mouths. The flame showed bright in the night, but quickly, the water dragons flew down and got rid of the flames. they did not want the Emporer to know of the oncoming slaughter. The farmers ran, and one was able to escape.

After weeks of traveling, the farmer reached the Emporer's palace. the Emporer was enraged and assembled his legions. The heavy clanking of metal rang through the town, and everyone ran, to the previously hidden shelters. The townsfolk were dazed and everyone was trying to see what was happening. little did they know, the fall of rome was coming, and a new empire was coming. they would be seeing a fire, worse than Pompeii.

Chapter 6 by blegen



The sun rose over Rome. It's rays cut through the mist of night, piercing the blackness, revealing the legions of Rome amassed around the mighty city. Their thousands of spears sparkled as the sunlight glinted off them, as the forest of the world's mightiest warriors prepared for the attack. Messengers rode far and wide, carrying the message of death and destruction across the Roman Empire. Legions marched to reinforce the defending garrison, as all the might and glory of Rome came together to protect the great city. It as truly a magnificent sight, the legions of Rome assembled, their thousands of men darkening the plains around Rome, their machines of war pointed towards the heavens. Within the city sacrifices were made to the godsd, that they might deliver them from the threat, and the Emperor fortified himself in the centre of Rome with the best of his guards around him.

Yet another army was gathering. To the north of Rome, a horde of great, scaly beasts glided across the fields, their eyes set on the city just now appearing over the horizon. They were

huge, terrible beings, of scales and claws and cruel eyes, their minds only set on the death and destruction on those who dared. See more of Story Wars

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Panic ran riot throughout the city at the roar of the dragons. People ran through the streets screaming in fear. Yet outside the city, the legions readied their weapons and awaited the onslaught.

The dragons swooped through the air. The legions fired their ballistae, the weapons propelling mighty spears at the dragons, but the beasts continued. The legions through their javelins as one, raining down upon the beasts. Yet still they continued. The legions broke and ran as the dragons soared down, their claws snatching up people and dashing them into the ground, their cruel heads spraying fire and utterly annihilating the legions. The dragons soared over the city, fiery death spraying from their jaws, destroying the city. They swooped down, grabbing men in their jaws and claws and eating them alive.

The Messenger sat deep within the dungeons, a small smile present on his face as he listened to the pride and glory of Rome evaporating like dew in the sunlight.

Chapter 7 by Skeld



The boat captain watched in horror at The Messenger. He was calm all night but now something was happening. His smile wided till he was grinning from ear to ear. But wait! where were his ears?. All he could see were two holes dug into the flanks of his skull. And are those? are those scales on his body?. The man suddenly looked up at the captain. " I warned you. I warned you all. But you did not listen and so you suffer." He smiled grimly. "Who are you?" the captain cried " And what are you? you are clearly not human!!!. You are some eldritch creature which even Tartarus cannot contain!!!".

At that the old creature laughed heartily. The creature's laugh echoed loudly even amidst the screams of agony and pain. " I am no mortal, you ignorant simpleton!. I am the one of the last remaining

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and half-demon. "SO NOW, YOU DIE!!!". The captain's scream echoed through distinctly amidst all the chaos.

Chapter 8 by R



His bonds burned, and before him the jail bars melted, and unhindered by any concern for the human world, the Dragon's Messenger left from the dungeons, climbing up the endless stone until he reached the streets.

Around him, Rome burns.

He steps through ashes and ruins, ignoring cries for help and screams of pain, until he reaches the river and watches the Emperor trying to flee.

Around him, Rome burns to ash and cinder and he raises a single hand.

The Emperor's ship lights on fire, and it is too quick for the Emperor himself to flee from the flames, burning him to a crisp and leaving nothing left but the melted stacks of gold he had taken. The Dragon's Messenger knows most of it is stolen, some even dragon's gold, but he leaves it be. Whoever survives this onslaught is worthy of whatever treasures are left in Rome.

There are dragons in the sky in numbers there haven't been since ancient times. The death of Rome is marked by the largest calling of dragons that has perhaps ever marched the earth.

Beneath them Rome burns.

He knows it shall be rebuilt. Humans are resourceful, after all, and in the end they come back and thrive, like a virus, or a pest. Truly it is of no concern to him, but for now, as he leaves the city, he enjoys the heat of the flames.

A small part of him hopes that once again, humanity will break their truce and he will watch over such ruin once more.

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